



U.S. Immigration  
and Customs  
Enforcement

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# News Release

## **MS 13 GANG MEMBERS DEPORTED**

*A total of 70 El Salvadorans, including 13 MS-13 gang members, were formally removed today*

HARLINGEN, Texas — U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) deported 70 people to El Salvador today, including 13 members of the notorious and violent MS-13 street gang.

Jose Marvin Claros-Argueta, 18, was among those removed from the United States. He was convicted in the 175<sup>th</sup> District Court in Bexar County on July 5 of stealing more than \$20,000. However, he had already received final orders of deportation more than two years earlier, but had absconded from these orders. His deportation was executed by ICE Detention and Removal Operations (DRO), along with 69 other criminal aliens and MS-13 street gang members.

In addition to the 13 gang members removed today, ICE also deported 57 other criminal aliens that had been convicted of crimes including: aggravated assault, robbery, possessing a controlled substance and shoplifting.

“The message is clear that we will continue our efforts on arresting and removing criminal aliens who pose a safety threat to our communities,” said Marc J. Moore, ICE San Antonio field office director. “ICE continues to aggressively remove those individuals who have no legal right to remain in the United States.”

The MS-13 gang, also known as Mara Salvatrucha, is widely known and considered the most violent street gang. ICE has recently targeted this gang to help rid the streets of criminals and make communities safer.

The MS-13 arrests were part of Operation Community Shield, an ICE initiative launched in January to target and dismantle violent street gangs across the country. ICE's combined authorities for enforcing immigration and customs laws are powerful tools in fighting the growth of criminal organizations. ICE has gathered thousands of names of known and suspected gang members from state and local law enforcement, and is comparing those names against immigration databases to determine their immigration status and deportability. ICE also investigates cross-border crimes typically committed by street gangs, such as: money laundering, narcotics smuggling, financial crimes and others. To date, ICE special agents have arrested more than 1,500 street gang members under Operation Community Shield.

Those deported today returned to El Salvador via government aircraft run by the U.S. Marshal Service, called the Justice Prisoner and Alien Transportation System (JPATS). JPATS is one of the largest transporters of prisoners in the world and handles hundreds of requests every day to move prisoners and criminal aliens nationally and internationally. ICE routinely deports aliens from various locations around the U.S. via the JPATS system to countries throughout the world.

These removals demonstrate ICE's commitment to restoring integrity to the nation's immigration system. ICE formally removed more than 161,000 aliens nationally in fiscal year 2004. More than half of those were criminal aliens.

There is an automatic 10-year bar against deported aliens from legally re-entering the U.S. Reentry after deportation is a felony with a maximum 20-year prison sentence.

During October, ICE San Antonio removed 2,267 criminal and non-criminal aliens on 21 flights. Those removed represented the following countries: Honduras, Guatemala, Nicaragua and El Salvador.

# ICE #

*U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement was established in March 2003 as the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security. ICE is comprised of four integrated divisions that form a 21st century law enforcement agency with broad responsibilities for a number of key homeland security priorities.*